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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

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COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

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SUBJECT Russian Displeasure with the CDU

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ORIGIN

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SUPPLEMENT

1. A deep rift recently developed between the SMA and the CDU. One of the immediate causes for this was the trip which Jacob Kaiser recently made to Düsseldorf and Cologne. During his visit Kaiser was able to meet members of the left wing of the CDU in the British Zone. These persons are, for the most part, former members of the old Christian trade unions. During several conversations which he had with them, they showed great understanding for the difficulty of Kaiser's present position. He invited several of the former trade unionists, as well as Minister-President Arnold, to attend the CDU convention in Berlin in September. Arnold will speak at this convention on the subject of "German Need". Officials in Karlshorst expressed extreme annoyance with Kaiser for holding these discussions, and accuse him of favoring the western powers. Above all, they fear the possible influence of the Christian trade unionists upon individual leaders of the FDGB during their stay in Berlin. Because he supported Kaiser in these moves, Bernott, labor union adviser of the CDU and a former Christian trade unionist, was forbidden to make speeches in the Russian Zone and to attend a meeting of FDGB functionaries belonging to the CDU which was recently held in Blankenburg.

2. A second reason for Soviet displeasure with the CDU was Kaiser's refusal to write an article for the Neue Zeit on the anniversary of the German attack on Russia. He maintains that he will not write an article upon order of the Russians which he would not have written otherwise. Colonel Tulpanov told Dertinger, Secretary-General of the CDU, that, although the Russian attitude toward the party has been friendly until the present, it will henceforth be purely neutral. The results of this change in policy are already noticeable; for example, negotiations for the release of the imprisoned students were broken off abruptly. It is expected that the Russians will order that the party conference in September be held in the zone, not in Berlin. Kaiser has stated that he will refuse to obey such an order, and, if necessary, resign from his position as party chairman in protest.

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3. Dr. Andreas Hermes, former chairman of the CDU in Berlin and the Russian Zone, visited Berlin from Tuesday, 1 July 1947, to Friday, 4 July. During his stay he had planned to talk to leading Russian authorities, but was disappointed to learn that General Rokossovski and General Georgiev were in Moscow and that General Ivanov was still in Paris. However, Colonel Slavin of the Political Department of the SMA was most eager to talk to him and arranged a meeting for July through a CDU official. During the political discussion which took place at this time, both Germans advised Slavin that the Russians must take the initiative in promoting positive steps to bring about the unification of Germany lest they be accused of obstructing all progress. They recommended that the Russians effect a coordination of the four allied economic councils in Berlin, with special committees for transportation, agriculture, industry, and finances. Hermes suggested that the creation of a coordinating committee should precede the establishment of a more permanent agency. When asked by Slavin what position he would like to hold in any Germany-wide economic conference, preparatory committee, or agency, Hermes replied that he would be glad to serve in any advisory capacity; he promised to arrange his affairs so that he would be available for duty along these lines.

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Comment: In view of the fact that he was formerly chairman of the CDU, Hermes' visit to Berlin may be connected with Soviet displeasure with Jacob Kaiser and any plans now afoot to replace him.

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